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THE CEA CRITIC

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WHO TEACHES ENGLISH COMPOSITION?

A committee of the Department of Humanities at the University of Idaho recently distributed a questionnaire designed to discover, among other things, who administers the English composition program, who teaches Freshman English, what percentage of various English Departments is made up of instructors, and what percentage consists of teaching fellows.

Replies received from twenty-six institutions—primarily state universities in the West, but including a sampling of private colleges, and institutions in other parts of the country—were of interest, particularly with reference to the question, "Who teaches English composition?" At the majority of colleges reporting, almost all members of the English Department teach some Freshman English.

This seems to be a policy at many institutions because of the expressed feeling that English composition, being one of the most important courses offered by the department, should engage the attention of the most experienced teachers on the staff. This is the current practice at Idaho, but we were interested to learn what success other institutions are having with M.A. and Ph.D. candidates as part-time teachers of English composition.

We are especially interested in this ques-

tion now because we expect to expand our M.A. program in English and possibly to offer the Ph. D. At present, even though we have fellowships for M.A. candidates in English, these graduate students do no teaching or reading of themes. Our instructors hold the M.A., and many of them are working toward the doctorate at other institutions. At the time we employ them, they generally have had previous teaching experience either in high schools or as teaching assistants in universities.

While a large number of our respondents indicated that nearly all members of their departments teach some English composition, most of them also stated that they use M.A. and Ph.D. candidates as part-time composition teachers. Only a few institutions require previous experience of their teaching assistants, and most universities report that their assistants do good work both as teachers and as graduate students. Most departments using teaching assistants give them special supervision or in-service training, which takes such form as seminars on teaching techniques, round-table discussions of course objectives, and the assignment of a senior staff member to counsel the new assistants.

Charles Norton Coe
The University of Idaho

HOW TO TEACH LITERALLY ANYTHING

The editor of a prominent journal last year called for articles on how to teach particular periods or types of literature. It seemed to me at the time unnecessarily repetitive to have several articles about different periods; and after giving the matter considerable thought, I have decided to inform my colleagues of certain techniques which I have myself only lately discovered and which are adaptable to any period or, indeed, to any subject at all.

It seemed to me that a single essay explaining these devices and their proper exploitation would eliminate the need for overlapping papers, thus saving already-harassed instructors the drudgery of unnecessary reading. While I certainly don't wish to deprive others of their chance to get published, my plan will at least permit those who are hard-pressed to devote their time to more useful projects.

In the first place, I think we in English have not been cognizant of the latest and most scientific advances in the teaching of our subject. Conservative by nature, we have clung to the old principles of a dull thoroughness in preparation, a narrow specialism in subject matter, and a boringly detailed explication in the classroom.

We have not, in short, tried to make our subject interesting. Meanwhile, we rail at

the educationists and their associates, accusing them of diluting subject matter or, at the least, of putting old wine into old bottles.

For example, there is much grumbling in some quarters—let's be honest—about exciting new developments like "Communication Skills." Never having taught it myself, I cannot justifiably defend it, nor indeed can I even guess from its title what it might be; but I am certain nonetheless that it is new and fresh and much more scientific than the old-fashioned English course and hence more in keeping with our time. One certainly should not be biased against anything he knows nothing about, and those who attack communications may very justifiably merit the label "reactionary."

At any rate, my recent experience among educationists has been an eye-opener to me in many ways, and I think I should pass on to the curious reader some of the discoveries I have made about how to teach literature. All the more so because I, too, used to be one of those dull, plodding teachers who stay up all hours of the night preparing the next day's lesson, dribbling their lives away in unrewarding study.

I have discovered that this labor isn't

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CEA Leaders Prominent At Higher Education Conference

The 14th National Conference on Higher Education, held in Chicago, March 1-4, 1959, turned out to be a CEA meeting within the larger context of the conference. The occasion was the annual meeting of the Association for Higher Education, this year addressing itself to "The Race Against Time" in higher education. A large group of CEA officers, directors, and members, headed by Max Goldberg, took prominent part in the conference. On a free evening they also found time to gather at the Clittdwellers Club and discuss far-ranging plans for the CEA.

Native Chicago CEA-ers Henry Sams and Carl Lefevre were joined by John Ball, John Hicks, Pat Hogan, Francis Horn, Don Lloyd, Harry Moore, and Don Sears. Many of these were chairmen of discussion groups during the conference.

Fran Horn chaired the group that considered how conditions of work for college faculty and administration can be improved, while Pat Hogan acted as recorder. Past CEA President Henry Sams led the discussion of college responsibility for the preparation of elementary and secondary school teachers. This discussion reflected the active CEA interest in teacher training that has been of concern to the General Composition Standards Committee and to Director Autrey Nell Wiley. Miss Wiley's statement of the CEA position on certification is now in the hands of the directors. This same concern takes Carl Lefevre to San Francisco this month to deliver a paper on certification at the meeting of CCCC.

New perspectives were opened by the group chaired by Don Lloyd. This group looked into the crystal ball to see fundamental changes in patterns of educational organization and methods of instruction caused by the revolution in electronics.

In another group, Don Sears acted as recorder of discussion on ways in which an institution can maintain its integrity amid increasing external controls. Special threats to institutional integrity were identified in pressure from legislatures, accrediting agencies, public opinion, and monolithic national testing organizations. Meanwhile, John Ball as analyst read a paper on ways

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THE CEA CRITIC

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ON GRADUATE STUDY

If Prof. Holt's attack on graduate study in the January issue of the *CEA Critic* represents the official position of the College English Association, as one may assume from its being a leading editorial—or for that matter if it represents merely the policy of that journal—its wholesale misrepresentation cannot be allowed to pass unnoticed.

He arraigned graduate study—with no exceptions whatsoever—as "inhuman," "anti-literary," concentrating on the study of "everything but the primary texts," constituting "a universe in which publication and research are the only things that

count," leading to a vocation in which "right contacts" and "flattering things to say" replace serious study, filled with "subtle dishonest," and populated by students whose "spirits are being broken."

Though it seems incredible that anyone acquainted with graduate study in this country could make statements so appallingly untrue except in jest, I have searched the article in vain for evidence of a tongue in Mr. Holt's cheek.

Sweeping condemnations like Mr. Holt's resemble charges that Republicans or Democrats or business men or physicians or Presbyterians or Frenchmen or electricians or husbands are all fools and rascals. No such wide indictment can possibly be true, and there is no point in making such a statement except as a joke.

Criticism of specific faults in individual institutions or programs are a different matter. It might be helpful to suggest that more time be spent on one kind of study than on another, that one method of examining be substituted for another, or that individual incompetent instructors be fired. But there is no use, except in one's most savage or depressed moods, in assaulting the whole human race or even a substantial section of it.

It would be equally valid—or silly—to condemn all undergraduate college teaching by instructors who have done no graduate study. In fact, it probably would be considerably more logical. Mere avoidance of graduate school does no more to guarantee brilliance, knowledge, spirit, and honesty in a teacher than lack of medical study qualifies one to be a physician or than ignorance of physics and mathematics qualifies one to be an engineer.

To answer individually the points that Mr. Holt makes would be as long and as futile a task as to prove that there are good Republicans or electricians or husbands. If Mr. Holt seriously believes what he claims, he should attempt to justify it by specific proof. It will not be sufficient, of course, to demonstrate that there are individual failures among graduate schools and graduate students. He will need to prove that they are all useless and pernicious. It would be an interesting experiment for him to try.

J. Milton French
Rutgers University

We assume our readers need not be told that the comments on this page, or on any other page of *The Critic*, whether written by the editor, the managing editor, the

president, or any one else, are not official pronouncements of the CEA unless so labeled, but merely reflect the thoughts of the person writing them.

If we are going to have discussion, we must have generalizations without being understood to say that there are no exceptions to the generalizations. Thus, for example, the scholar who remarks that the drama was in a bad way in Victorian England does not have to prove that there was not a single good play written in that period. He is giving a total impression as we were trying to give a total impression of the state of graduate school work. We will be delighted to learn that our total impression is wrong.

Recently we came across a passage in Thoreau's essay "Walking" which puts very well what we had in mind in our comments in the January *Critic*: "I would say to the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, sometimes,—Go to grass. You have eaten hay long enough. The spring has come with its green crop. The very cows are driven to their country pastures before the end of May; though I have heard of one unnatural farmer who kept his cow in the barn and fed her on hay the year round. So, frequently, the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge treats its cattle."

L. E. H.

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STILL MORE ON THIS, ETC.

A recent article in the *Critic* discussed a current, vague use of the demonstrative pronoun, "this," in preference to the pronoun, "that." This leads to speculation on the cause of this—linguistic phenomenon.

Even in the Old-English declension of this there seems to have been a tendency to use the "this"-sound in as many cases as possible. Perhaps the terminal sound of the word is far more euphonious and easily blended with a following locution than is the terminal sound of "that," which itself almost forces a light juncture in the flow of speech. Perhaps, also, the human creature has a lazy propensity for voiceless sounds, or those which call for least motion of his lips, tongue, and jaw.

I would like to suggest that students, especially those in freshmen and sophomore classes, have an inelegant and frequent preference for "that" as a relative pronoun. Given a choice between, "The man *who* . . ." and "The man *that* . . ."? You guessed correctly. It requires even more motion of the mouth to pronounce "who" than to utter "that"; and "who" is not easily slurred with a following expression.

Yet, linguistically, the instinctive selection of "that" has some credence of "auctorite." There was, after all, no inflected relative pronoun in Old English—only the relative particle *the*, which was often combined with the demonstrative *se*, *thaet*, *seo*. Thus our current speech is, at times,

revolutionary, in the literal sense of "revolve."

While I am on the subject of speech among students, I should like to speculate, also, on the result of losing the strong, or "double-negative," which was so effective in Old and Middle English. In very natural rhythmic euphony and concision, students probably compensate for this loss by employing an increased use of negative contractions. "Do not," "have not," and "will not," are actually rare in today's themes. Nor do young writers stop with the mere contraction of negatives. Contractions of all sorts are a part of their running, staccato prose-patterns.

Staccato? The structure of the periodic sentence is, of course, an archaic art in today's collages, as quaint as an old-fashioned course in rhetoric. And this archaic art has, in its absence, made a sharp change in today's conventions of punctuation. It is with a sense of *malaise* that I grade the standard entrance-examinations in English, or make use of grading-symbols with referents to old and orthodox syntax. For I know, in my teacher's subliminal sixth-sense, that the heavy pauses required by colons and semicolons are rarely applicable to the abbreviated sentences of the entering student; and that all the fuss about dependent and independent clauses has more meaning to a Winston Churchill than to a freshman in my classes. (Poor Sir Winston! He has been terribly abused as the last of the great Victorian stylists; and if only he had not said "up with which . . ." his name would not be so bandied among us.)

I spoke of a return to Old-English usage. Nothing has amused me more than the excessive revival of the locution, "wise," which in the early language meant "manner," or "Condition." And so it is now used, in infinite combinations of an adverbial nature. "Lice," after all, was a good, strong suffix; nor was "like" objectionable in such vigorous expressions as "bearlike" and "warlike."

Most of us have encountered, at some time or other, the marvelous and personable rage of the *Wraetlice Wyrn*; and few of us object to the anomalous and useful locution, "likewise." But there is something soft in the degeneration of "lice" and "liche" into so unemphatic a suffix as "ly." Thus, today, we channel our thoughts "moneywise," "Taxwise," "Businesswise"—even "languagewise" and "communication-wise," in our teachers' jargon. And soon, we

shall arise, "reluctantwise" from the Nembutol of the night, and go "dexadriwise" and "coffeewise" to our "midgetwise" conveyances, and then "campuswise" and "greetingwise" into our classrooms, to sit "somnolentwise" and "verticalwise" through an otherwise tolerable hour; that is, relativewise speaking "educationalwise."

Is there a pattern, then, in the seeming return to Old-English structures and locutions? Yes, there is a pattern; though I, a mere benighted teacher of English, am not the one to define it. There is, for example, an increased use of noun-adjectives—of combinations of nouns having the force of a single word. (You have no idea what the punctuation of two nouns used with the force of a single noun is doing to the imbalance of my *id*, and *ego*, and *superego*. Someday, I shall just leave out the hyphen, make the gamine gesture to the latter, and let my limp libido enjoy its deserved relaxation.)

Yes, the accelerated combination of two nouns in a virtual new coinage is not unlike the *kenning* of the Anglo-Saxon. True, his purpose was poetic and metaphoric enrichment. Our purpose today is the shortening and pruning of a language which has an almost too infinite vocabulary for its own sobriety and health. It is also the avoiding of a genitive or a dative in a positional syntax that requires their prepositional expressing; and it is a part of an entire pattern of adding vigor while, at

(Please turn to p. 4)

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Still More on This, Etc. (Continued from p. 3)

the same time, cutting the use of an excessive number of prepositional phrases. It is, in short, what a former decade called "streamlining," in a delightful noun-compound of its own. The reasons for the trend would require genuine linguistic study. Probably newspaper-headlines and popular journalism add their contributing effect.

There are other analogies of our present tendencies in speech and the language in its simpler, germanic and formative stages. The similarity seems accidental, a result of an unconscious effort to cut ornamental and extraneous locutions from modern speech. But, like all teachers of freshmen and sophomore classes, I've stacks of student-verbiage neatly bounded in rubber-bands; and, before making further comments, I must continue my research into their rhythms, and syntactical patterns.

This would surely be avoiding teacher-temptation of the moment, and would be acting the part of a professor **that** sticks to her main job—**prudentwise**, so to **speak-wise**. And grading the papers of freshmen, as you know, is usually **strictly from ugh**, **not so pure**. It's the most. Although, at times, its confounded **drag**, can be **neat**. After all, one must do one's professorial **bit on the scene**, put the whole circle in a basket-ball net, if some of the **squares** are to **ace it**. And, believe me, in my classes, some of them will **ace it** on examination, if they convey, **logicwise** and **metaphoricwise**, a basic excellence of rhythm and of idea.

E. Maxine MacKay
Jacksonville University

Michigan CEA Spring Meeting

The Michigan CEA will meet on April 18 at Flint Junior College and Flint College of the U. of M. Registration will be at 9:30 A. M. and at 10:15 three concurrent sessions will commence, on Honors Programs, on Modern Poetry, and on the Humanities Program at Western Mich. Univ. The business session at 11:30 will consider teacher certification and junior college certification. Another business session after lunch will consider the report of the junior college committee on class size, teaching load, etc. at two and four-year colleges. At 2:30 P. M. there will be an address by Henry Brown on "Regional Writing, Past, Present, and Future."

Margaret A. Dempster
Henry Ford Community College

THE EAGLES GATHER (Program Notes of the Regionals Breakfast, Riggs Restaurant, NYC December 29, 1958, 7:30 a.m.)

The fourth annual Regionals Breakfast was opened by the welcoming remarks of Pat Hogan (Miss. State U.), who then introduced outgoing president Henry Sams (Univ. of Chicago). Henry stressed the role of the national CEA vis-a-vis the regionals, pointing especially to the help given by the national in organizational meetings. He also indicated that no help is often the best help: the national office will not and should not encumber a healthy regional organization.

Pat reminded the group that, although the strength of the national is in its regionals, the regionals do not always live up to their essential functions:

1. Regional members are allowed to drift along without being urged to join the national;
2. Regionals too often fail to provide adequate "feed-back" to the national;
3. Not enough interchange among regionals takes place. (As an excellent specific reaction to this point, Herman Estrin, president of the Greater New York Regional, has sent a copy of the GNYR October program to all regionals and has promised a copy of the spring program currently being planned.)

Ed Hirshberg (East Carolina College) reported on the co-operation between a regional (N. C.—Va.) and the national, particularly (1) in the use of national speakers, and (2) the use of national funds in setting up the young regional.

General discussion for a time centered on THE CRITIC. John Hicks (Stetson U.) pointed out that "It is supposed to be a conversation piece among members, not a literary publication." John Ball (Miami U.) added that "We should emphasize the importance of THE CRITIC as the only open exchange forum in the profession." Max Goldberg (CEA Exec. Director) made several succinct points: "There is a continuing re-examination of the editorial policy of THE CRITIC. At what point does informality stop? There must be an appropriate concept of responsibility. Conversely, where is it our editorial responsibility to say our forum stops at this point? THE CRITIC is basically a newsletter and a forum, not a repository or a learned journal. It must be an on-going query."

While some dissatisfaction was expressed, the consensus was that the forensic, tentative, and colloquial tone made THE CRITIC a unique organ. It could improve, but only if members contributed more and better material. Nathan Starr (Univ. of Florida) reminded us that "THE CRITIC, for good or ill, reflects our membership."

Max Goldberg spoke cogently and stimulatingly of the new era that the profession is approaching. The next decade, he feels, will be a period of major professional readjustment. In such a period, there must be a national organization to meet the national

crisis. Local groups will increasingly find that their problems reach across the nation; they will therefore turn increasingly to the national to make their position felt on the national scene. All national organizations will increasingly co-operate (witness the Co-operative English Program) and will turn to CEA for grass root meetings. CEA has a special know-how in this area. Max concluded, "Anything we have done in the past will be dwarfed by the future."

Pat gave excerpts from replies to his questionnaire to regional workers, including members of the Committee on Regional Activity and Development and regional representatives who attended the 1957 CEA Breakfast-Program in Madison, Wisconsin. The following were among the points cited as thought-provoking areas of concern for the committee, possibly for CEA members everywhere:

1. "Why should English departments in any region feel that they need uniting under a CEA regional association?"
2. "What is the specific role of a regional CEA to differentiate it from regional MLA's and regional NCTE activity?"
3. "It might even be worthwhile examining the present state of relations between national and regional, for there is often little to suggest that any meaningful relation exists."
4. "Should regional CEA's seek to establish..."

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lish lines of communication between high school and college English? Is this a legitimate CEA concern?"

Incoming president John Ciardi (Rutgers Univ.) spoke vigorously. Highlights of his remarks were: "The essence of CEA is this kind of discussion (as at this meeting). This is the time for getting firm about English departments and standards. There is much serious work to be done, and it can't be done by people harried by overwork and underpay. The plumber and the steamfitter have shown more character in getting more economic respect than English teachers. We need to have the universities hire us back into the libraries without the need for a second job and a lot of "busy" work. Thus, we could have a way of life of slow time for the outpouring of self. CEA will never be rich and large, but it can be fertile and fruitful."

The meeting was closed with Pat's suggestion that all those present use the Committee on Regional Activity and Development as a clearing-house for both regional problems and achievements, keeping in mind the possibility of exchanging such information, perhaps by means of a newsletter such as the one prepared and distributed by Al Madeira in 1958.

Regional representatives, officers, and directors attending the meeting included: John Hicks, Stetson U.; Charles M. Clark, American University; Hilda Fife, University of Maine; Henry W. Sams, University of Chicago; Richard Hovey, Western Md. College; Curtis Dahl, Norton, Mass.; Marvin B. Perry, Jr., Washington and Lee; Edward L. Anderson, North Adams STC, Mass.; Herman A. Estrin, Newark College of Engineering; Milton S. Smith, Southeastern Louisiana College; Alice R. Bensen, Eastern Michigan College; Allen Blow Cook, U. S. Naval Academy; Herbert M. Schueller, Wayne State University; W. Otto Birk, Univ. of Colorado; Nathan C. Starr, Univ. of Florida; Elizabeth Schneider, Temple University; John Ball, Miami of Ohio; Gwin J. Kolb, U. of Chicago; Albert P. Madeira, University of Mass.; Maxwell H. Goldberg, University of Mass.; Harry T. Moore, Southern Illinois U.; Edgar Hirshberg, East Carolina College; John Ciardi, Rutgers U.; Donald A. Sears, Upsala, secretary; Patrick G. Hogan, Mississippi State U., chairman...

Patrick G. Hogan, Jr., Chmn.
Albert P. Madeira
Donald A. Sears

Thoughts while pondering
Antique impossible names
I would forego Shakespeare powdered,
To gaze upon the bones
Of Cyriack Skinner, Wynkyn de Worde,
And Inigo Jones.

Robert W. Duncan
Southern Illinois University

REGIONAL — NATIONAL CEA STRENGTHENED COOPERATION

As a result of such recent regional-national activities as the annual Regional Breakfast, the year-long work of the Committee on Regional Activity and Development, the increased use of national officers as speakers at regional meetings, and the centering of regional services at the national office under Albert P. Madeira, the CEA has reached a time when the directors wish to take appropriate cognizance of the growth of these regional-national lines. To this end they voted at the meeting of December 29, 1958, in New York City, to formalize the work of the three men (after the executive director) who have been most active in regional work—Patrick G. Hogan, Jr.; Albert P. Madeira; and Donald A. Sears.

The work of the first two is to remain essentially the same: Pat Hogan is to continue his excellent grass-roots work with the regionals through his committee and the annual breakfast which it runs; Al Madeira continues to be the clearing house at the national office for regional information. Don Sears, however, assumes a new office as middle-man, that of Co-ordinator of Regional Activities.

The functions of this new office are less clearly defined than those of the other two. In creating the office, the directors purposely left the duties somewhat vague so that the new office might develop within the present framework, supplementing and helping where needed. Their intent, however, is not vague. Aware of the expressed difficulty of Pat Hogan in the follow-up procedures of building new regionals, they appointed a national director, Don Sears, to be responsible for the follow-up. In their discussion of December 28, 1958, the directors urged those responsible for regional development to make 1959 a year in which a single goal would be set, a goal of the establishment of some one new regional. To do this, several steps are necessary, steps which demonstrate how the three offices should function with one another:

1. Pat Hogan and the Committee on Regional Activity and Development should prepare a priority list of those areas needing follow-up help in establishing new regionals.

2. The Co-ordinator of Regional Activities from this list should determine where to focus national effort of funds and personnel. He then should set in motion the

national machinery by alerting Al Madeira. (Normally the Co-ordinator will follow the priority rating of the committee.)

3. Al Madeira should supply the help of the national office through its files, funds, and mailing facilities.

4. The three officers (Hogan, Sears, Madeira) should operate as a team in close co-operation with one another and with the key people in the regional area where the year's action is to take place.

In no way shall the creation of the new office be construed as a duplication of the Regional Committee, which will continue to deal with regional activity, that is, spotting key people, taking the pulse of the local membership, planning and running such functions as the Regional Breakfast. In its second area of duty, that of regional development, the Committee can in the future count on a more active co-operation of the national CEA through the Co-ordinator. In sum, the Co-ordinator of Regional Activities is to function as an Executive Secretary of the present committee.

Maxwell H. Goldberg

The English Record, publication of the New York State English Council, Vol. IX, No. 2, contains an article "Nightmare and Dream" by Strang Lawson of Colgate which urges that encouragement like that given to science and mathematics teachers (who can receive free tuition and living costs for attending summer graduate programs) be also extended to teachers in social studies, the arts, and English.

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HOW TO TEACH ANYTHING (Continued from p. 1)

at all necessary; in fact, the vision of wasted past time at first haunted me, though this has gradually dissipated and been replaced by a general lassitude and feeling of satisfaction with my future as a teacher. Let me tell you why this has been.

Many young persons leaving graduate school and launching out into the world of college teaching find themselves in situations they did not expect. In many small colleges, for example, one finds that he may unexpectedly be called on to teach courses far outside the range of his specialty. Accustomed to the minute specialism of the graduate school, young teachers may experience something like shock at the suggestion that, since Dr. Jones is taking next semester off, YOU will be expected to teach romantic poetry, even though your special field is the medieval epic. Or, perhaps twelve people inadvertently signed up for that course in the European novel that has been in the catalogue for nine years. Someone has to do it, the older men avoid it, and so the young man is stuck.

I was myself once offered a position in a small college where the beginning schedule was to include Shakespeare, English novel, American novel, Advanced Grammar and Composition, and Modern Poetry. Appalled

by a vision of impossible preparation, and suspecting the president of being a bit dotty, I turned the job down. Now, of course, I can see that my attitude was the result of ignorance plus the absurd ideals instilled in me by the graduate school; I think wistfully of that post now, for it offered a fine opportunity for a person of wide interests.

But to return to the problem at hand. Suppose you are a specialist in the renaissance, perhaps in the drama exclusive of Shakespeare, and you are assigned a course in American literature. Suppose further that you not only know nothing about American literature, but dislike it intensely. No need to despair, nor to labor unduly in reading and preparation; these devices I am about to propose will suffice not only to get you through the course, but also, if used properly, to preserve the illusion that you know what you are talking about.

Like most of my colleagues, I assume that the chief problem involved in any course lies in filling up the time. This means, in a three-hour course, that forty-five hours of class time must be somehow totally consumed. The first of these devices I am about to discuss is one of the best time-consumers of all, and that is the oral report.

The oral report should occupy 15 or 20 minutes (or even more, if you like), and at least one should be assigned for each class meeting. (Perhaps two would be better since assignees sometimes fail to show up.) These reports may be on nearly anything—books, ideas, themes, even biographies of authors. A 15-minute report usually takes about half an hour, allowing time for the deliverer to fumble with his notes, and for the class and teacher to discuss it when it is over.

For example, these reports might be on different books by the same author. Suppose you have a week to spend on Hawthorne. Have the whole class read *The Scarlet Letter*, and assign reports on *The Blithedale Romance* and *The House of the Seven Gables* for Monday; for Wednesday on *The Marble Faun*; and for Friday, on selected short stories or even the journals. Already, you see, half or more of the three periods are filled. (Ingenuity counts here; on "one-book" authors like Thoreau, single chapters like "The Bean Field" or "Brute Neighbors" might be assigned. There are lots of possibilities.)

Meanwhile the students get a much wider acquaintance with an author than if one book were painfully analyzed in class by the teacher. Even if nothing very clear emerges from this, at least the teacher has been spared elaborate preparation and the terrible drain on his energies that such entails. And the time is consumed.

A second very handy technique is the panel discussion. To fill in the rest of the time on Wednesday, for example, you might select certain students to hash out *The Scarlet Letter* before the class. With an occasional prod from you, they will probably

cover the main points of the book and inform their fellows admirably. Anyone who has seen this device in action cannot help admiring it, I think, for the degree of insight that can be attained and for the way in which time passes.

One caution, however; the device should be resorted to sparingly, for it tends to use up too many students, some of whom you may need later for other things.

Closely related to the panel discussion is the debate, which can easily be arranged between two groups of students on such subjects as "Does Hester Prynne suffer justifiably for her sin?" All sorts of similarly exciting topics can be imagined, and this technique is a very lively one, leading sometimes to complete activity on the part of the class.

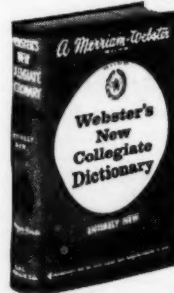
Two cautions are in order here: first, the chief shortcoming of the panel discussion applies to the debate also, for both tend to use up too many students. The other complaint is that debate results are sometimes unpredictable, and ill feeling occasionally results among the students. This should be avoided if possible.

One should not overlook the potentialities of the audio-visual aids, as they are called. Some of us in English tend to scorn these materials which, in fact, are often interesting and very time-consuming.

For example, many colleges have large collections of the old "Invitation to Learning" broadcasts, which consist of discussions of books by a motley assortment of scholars and writers. While the participants tend to ramble a bit, sometimes even missing the subject completely, the fact remains that these recordings play for thirty minutes each. Indeed, since some books have been taken up more than once, a teacher might have as much as two hours of stimulating discussion about something like

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Huckleberry Finn.

Thanks largely to the popularity of Dylan Thomas, English teachers would not overlook the many LP records containing poetry readings either by the poets themselves or by others. There are even short-story writers and novelists reading their prose; and many an LP record, after all, is good for almost an hour, counting both sides.

Also, many college teachers are unaware of the existence of movies and filmstrips, but what could be better than a filmstrip like "A Visit to Emerson's Country" (20 mins.) when dealing with the New England renaissance? Teachers should certainly investigate the holdings of their colleges in these fields.

Great additional possibilities exist also in the field trip to places of literary significance. One might visit Walden Pond to watch the bulldozers at work from almost anywhere in the New England area. Red Cloud, Nebraska, for example, contains the home of Willa Cather; Redding, Connecticut, the place Mark Twain died; Prairie Avenue in Chicago, the scene of Studs Lonigan.

The possibilities here are somewhat limited to the area one lives in, of course; but at least a trip to Mark Twain's wife's family's home in Elmira, New York, from the nearby countryside ought to be good for one or two class periods, as should other pilgrimages.

Other more familiar possibilities exist, of course. Many teachers already fall back frequently on the reading of short stories or essays or excerpts from significant novels. This time-honored device often fills the bill exactly and is very stimulating to students.

Writing is always possible, too, but should be used only as a last resort. As-

signing a paper on the folk elements in Faulkner may be very well for students, and it does leave the teacher entirely free for the period. But one should think of the consequences: papers that have to be read and graded, at least occasionally. Most of the time the price of this freedom is too high.

Well, and so our week devoted to Hawthorne (or Twain, or Faulkner) turned out to be not so bad after all. With the help of the universal devices, the time has passed rapidly and the teacher has not only got through the week without undue strain but he has had more material, and of more variety, than he needed—and all this without actually having had to read a single book, or even having had to teach anything.

In addition, he has had the satisfaction of knowing that he has used the latest, most scientific practices. And finally, he knows that he has been as democratic as it is possible to be, since each student has had a chance to express himself, no matter what he has said.

The virtues of this approach to the unfamiliar course (or, I repeat, to any course) are obvious. Not so obvious, however, are the dividends this may pay the teacher in his personal life. Fear of inadequate knowledge, worries about time and preparation, and other carking cares—these all go by the board, and one feels lighter and more confident of handling any situation.

One also has much more spare time; I myself have joined the Optimist Club and taken up golf, skills I never had time for previously. Certainly, the widespread adoption of these techniques among college teachers would make English teaching a much more scientific, more democratic, and an easier occupation than it now is.

Paul C. Wermuth
Berlin, Conn.

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SANDLOT COMPOSITION

Plagiarism by a young person usually reflects his inexperience in manipulating sentence and paragraph patterns. Ask him to talk, and he will usually have a good deal to say. If he can't talk either, he needs something other than a squirt of red ink on his paper.

The average student knows almost nothing about the relationship between speech and writing. He doesn't know that the two codes, while different in many ways, are basically similar in their systematic maneuvering of morphology, syntax, and vocabulary. What he says, he will write. If he doesn't talk much, he probably doesn't read much. If he hasn't read extensively, his skill in manipulating the language is likely to be slight.

A boy who hasn't played sandlot baseball seldom makes a college intramural team and certainly not the varsity. A student who hasn't written a great deal can't gain much from a handbook with hundreds of do's and don'ts. The easy way out is to lace together sentences lifted from obscure sources.

But he is so inexperienced that he doesn't know enough to be a skillful cheat. He copies obvious things and gets caught. He copies after his first straggling efforts have given a low fielding and batting average. He doesn't know the tricks of lifting material and dressing up in borrowed mental clothes for his performance in the academic ball game. He doesn't know that he can write "Somebody has said . . ." or "The opinion is widely held that . . ." He doesn't know that paraphrasing is a quick shift from a homerun stance to a bunting procedure.

The chief reason for plagiarism is the overstress on vocabulary building and usage study in a context of sideline activity. He is taught to be a grandstand roofer for language instead of an accomplished sandlot player. He can call plays—do an objective test—like a bleacher quarterback, but he is never allowed to play in the game.

The way to end plagiarism is by putting the student to playing sandlot composition. Let him enjoy himself trying out the tricks in pattern practice and getting fun out of writing. Let him practice bunting and fielding easy ones. He'll never get on the Yankees by present procedures. He might get there if he is given a chance to learn the tricks in joyous practice. **Harry R. Warfel**

University of Florida

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SQUARE EGGHEADS

Executives and the Liberal Arts

Since the inception of the conferences between proponents of the arts and representatives of business and industry—conferences in which the CEA took a pioneering lead—many of us have noted a happy change in the climate of opinion. Recent conferences, sponsored by the Humanities Center, have defined a growing area of mutual interest and concern. Today it would seem that business leaders accept the value of the liberal arts so wholeheartedly that a variety of "back-to-college" programs have been underwritten by a number of corporations.

Against the background of this happy acceptance of the humanities, we welcomed the announcement of a TV drama dealing with the experience of a group of sales executives who return to college for a special summer session. But when the U. S. Steel Hour drama "The Square Egghead," written by Louis Pelletier was shown on March 11, we weren't so sure it was a blessing to the cause. The old stereotypes were still in prominence as doddering philosophy Professor Tillinghast muttered about knowing thyself and English instructor Edith Seeley provided somewhat unwilling romantic interest. Tom Ewell gave us the expected portrait of a carefree bachelor sales engineer, Barney Henderson, torn between the flesh of chorus girlfriend and the spirit of literature and "finer things" as set forth by Miss Seeley (June Lockhart).

The final bromide was provided by the ending. Barney found his soul through philosophy, literature, and true love. He told off his boss, lost his job, and won his female professor. Meanwhile Professor Tillinghast—Old Tilly—played hooky with Barney's ex-chorine. Such were the unsettling results of sending a top-notch businessman back to college. Such was the broadening of cultural outlook and cross-fertilization of business and the arts.

For more than ten years we have been preaching the value of the humanities to an industrial society. If the only values that such a society can find lie in rebellion, rejection, and resulting poverty, we still have a job to do. Can it be that we have oversold our product and for the wrong reasons? Inasmuch as television reflects popular opinion, it might seem so. Does studying the humanities produce only a square egghead, a formerly useful executive now

rendered unfit for earning a living?

Donald A. Sears
Upsala College

CLARITY

With Apologies to "St. Paul to the Corinthians."

Brethren:

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not clarity, I am become as booming brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And if I have unity, and know all the mysteries, and all knowledge, and if I have force so as to threaten mountains, and have not clarity, I say nothing.

Clarity is logical, is wise; clarity becloudeth not, dealeth not obscurely, is not puffed up;

Is not redundant seeketh not her own, is not provoked to abruptness; thinketh no delusion.

Rejoiceth not in ornateness, but striveth for the truth:

Bareth all things, ordereth all things, thinketh through all things, defineth all things.

Clarity never falleth away; whether prophecies shall be made void, or tongues shall cease, or knowledge shall be made forbidden.

When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child. But, when I became a man, I put away the pratings of a child.

Then I perceived ideas through words vaguely; but now, more surely. Then I spoke only in part; but now I shall be known even as I know.

And now there remain force, unity, clarity, these three: but the greatest of these is clarity.

Bernard R. Campbell
John Carroll University

Greater N. Y. CEA

Annual Spring Meeting, Saturday, April 25, at 10:45 A.M. Marchette Chute, author of *Geoffrey Chaucer of England*, *Shakespeare of London*, *Ben Johnson of Westminster*, *Introduction to Shakespeare*, and *Stories from Shakespeare*, will speak on the topic "How a Book Grows." The meeting will be held in the auditorium of the Donnell Library Center, 20 W. 53d St., directly opposite the Museum of Modern Art.

Herman A. Estrin
President, GNY CEA
Newark College of Engineering

The woman who reads dictionaries



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PHYLLIS MCGINLEY, one of America's favorite writers of verse (including *The Love Letters of Phyllis McGinley*) says:

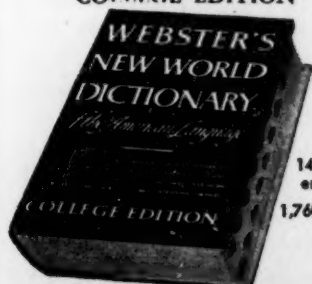
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"THIS SORRY SCHEME OF THINGS"

If a student can "pick up" as he needs it, traits and practices of teaching from observation alone, then teacher-education has come to be entirely a "sorry scheme of things."

In the February 1959 issue of *The CEA Critic*, Mr. Foerster makes the challenging statement that the qualified student will "pick up by actual experience about as soon as he needs it" the practices which make for pedagogical success.

Even if the "naturally qualified" and intelligent student has great eclectic ability it is difficult to see how much good he can "pick up" without guidance and counselling. He has been exposed to many different types of teachers — from the even-toned scholar to the professional eccentric perhaps—who influence him one way or the other. He has also probably been exposed on all sides to the jargon of the profession, to well-modulated speaking voices, and to harsh and strident ones, to witty teachers, and to bores.

Has the student learned to listen to himself critically, does he really know if he is using dull and mannered vocabulary, does he know if he is talking too loud, or talking too much, or talking too fast? Has this "potentially excellent teacher" picked up the art of questioning, the many approaches to motivation, the tricks of making the subject-matter meaningful, and the need for making it clear to his classes; or has he also picked up, unconsciously, the mannerisms, the verbal clichés, and the platitudes of his models?

My observation of young people who expect to teach is that they would do well to learn how to teach; yet, I would be the first to protest if theory outstrips practice.

Needless to say, there are many things one cannot learn in an education course; there are many things that only the world can teach; there are many things that are so deeply rooted in psychology of the individual, that it is almost platitudinous to say that teaching is more of an art than a science.

Since the business of education is with the trained intellect, we must realize that there are right ways and perhaps many wrong ways to train those whose business will be in intellectual activity. Perhaps there is such a person as a born teacher, but teaching will be more of an art after the science of education has been mastered. Even though perfection is a difficult thing to come by, our reach should exceed our grasp lest we be content to perpetuate mediocrity.

The plan instituted by the school of education at the University of Wisconsin, referred to briefly as "some experience in supervised student teaching," is perhaps the soundest approach to the problem of getting competent teachers into the profession.

Now, I should like to offer some of my advice to a beginning teacher, even though such advice may seem paradoxical.

Learn the technique of teaching, and having learned it thoroughly, try to forget it. Study the laws of learning, the principles of teaching, the value of organization, the necessity of timing, the consistent point of view, the careful handling of detail (the very essence of art), and the fatal pitfalls of platitudinizing. Then having mastered, if possible, every rule of thumb, dismiss it into the labyrinthian ways of your own mind and leave it there to make its signals and flash its warnings. The sensitive feeling, "this is not right," or "something ought to be different," will prove that these signals are working.

Then, and only then, with the science of knowing, and the art of doing, our young teachers may help remould the sorry scheme of things nearer to our heart's desire.

Clara M. Siggins
Boston College

(Continued from p. 1)

in which a favorable campus climate of opinion can be created so that major curricular changes are acceptable.

A particularly lively session was that on the shape of things to come in the Humanities curriculum. Chaired by Harry Moore and recorded by John Hicks, the session took on the flavor of a CEA institute. In the group were Max Goldberg, Pat Hogan, and Don Sears, who acted as resource persons.

While not present at the AHE meetings, CEA President John Ciardi was preparing to invade Chicago the following week to talk at Roosevelt College.

Donald A. Sears
Upsala College

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MEMORANDUM

Date: February 10, 1959

From: Professor Durable

To: President Muchness

Copies to: Vice-President, Dean, Registrar, Chairman of Faculty, Chairman of English Department, College Archives, Superintendent of Grounds and Buildings.

Pursuant to your memorandum of December 9, 1958, I hereby make application for college funds toward defraying my expenses in attending the meetings of the following learned societies: Combined Annual Meeting of the Society for the Conjugation of Irregular Verbs (SCIV) and the Modern Declension Association (MDA) February 20, at the Hotel Blatt, Clevago, Illiana.

Degree of participation: Last year I was elected to the office of First Person Plural in the SCIV and have been asked to have an active voice in the officiating of the annual meeting, particularly since the man who has been serving as Past Perfect will be unable to assume his duties as Future Indicative. A great deal of structuring and restructuring of the organization is being contemplated, and the 52 directors feel it imperative that I be there to implement the liaison procedure between the two Committees of the Whole and Working Participles.

I have also been asked to present at this meeting a paper on "Evidence of Irregular Conjugation in the colleges of the Southeast, with particular reference to the use of the Subjunctive with 'You All'."

It is widely felt that thorough research into this study may well revolutionize the approach to correlating the student's acquisition of relevant data with his coefficient of adaptability to new phonomana to say nothing of his intellectual exploitation of meaningful significance. The brilliant work in this field by Burudowski of Buda-

pest in the 1830's will immediately come to the minds of all.

Benefits accruing to me: Unquestionably I would gain academically and professionally by attendance at this meeting. College faculty members do get into ruts. (I know some who have stayed in the past tense for 30 years.) But of greater importance, my attendance at such a meeting will help me to see the student as a whole instead of as a fragment.

Benefits accruing to the college:

1. These two associations have at their disposal enormous sums of money with which they endow chairs.
2. Cottage College will become a byword among hundreds of educational leaders.
3. Possibly I can get a speaker for Commencement.

Attached please find copy of the program of the meeting.

**JOINT ANNUAL MEETING
SOCIETY FOR THE CONJUGATION OF
IRREGULAR VERBS AND THE
MODERN DECLENSION ASSOCIATION**
Hotel Blatt, Clevago, Illiana, Feb. 20, 1959

Morning Session, Main Lounge

Presiding: Dr. Marshmallow Tonsils,
Past Perfect, SCIV

9:00-10:30 Welcome by Vice-President
Flurp of the MDA

10:45-12:15 Welcome by Vice-President
Przlf of the SCIV

12:30 Luncheon, Grill Room
Entertainment: Singing by the First Grade
of Public School 21.

Afternoon Session

2:00 P.M. Meetings of Study Groups.

GROUP I

Leader: Dr. Kneehighmeyer Meomeister
Rofenistenaur, Professor of Comparative Past Participology, Mishmash University.

Subject: The Subversive Complement in the Nominative Dissolute.

Place: Mezzanine, between the third and fourth palms at the left of elevator.

GROUP II

Leader: Dr. Glogel Gargle, Professor of Broken English, University of the North.

Subject: Palatal Pablums in Participial Yodelling.

Place: Southwest Corner of the Main Dining Room.

GROUP III

Leader: Miss Seraphina Singular, Odd Member of the Committee on Opticism.

Subject: The Cerebral Optative in Compound Parenthesis.

Place: The Dandelion Room.

GROUP IV

Leader: Miss Millie Meyhem, chairman of the Committee on Intransitive Onomatopoeia in the Vocative.

Subject: Practical Applicability of Elliptical Cacaphony.

Place: Main Storage Room, (rear of Manager's office).

4:30 P.M. Main Lounge, General gathering to Synthesize and Categorize the Data Systematized by the Groups. An attempt will be made at Articulation by the Executive Committee.

5:30 P.M. Meeting of Officers. Room 709. (Suggestions for restructuring may be handed in triplicate to Vice-President Flurp or Vice-President Przlf.)

Evening Session

7:00 P.M. Dinner, Main Dining Room

Menu: Chicken a la King, Watered Mashed Potatoes, Bullet Peas.

Presiding: Vice-President Flurp, Modern Declension Association.

PAPER "The Hysterical Genitive, Some Vestigial Usages in Six Counties of Northern Michigan," by Miss Flossie Fluss, for 47 years Head of the Department of English, Bishwosh College.

PAPER "Changes in the Funereal Dative, 1770-1830," by Professor Isnit Phooee. Acting Temporary Chairman, second sub-committee of the Fourth Study Group of the Commission of Investigation of Minor Declension Lapses, the Southern Branch of the Eastern Section of the Modern Declension Association (usually shortened to SCFSGCIMIDLSBES MDA).

The Penna. CEA will meet April 25 at the Grey Towers Campus of Beaver College, Glenside, Pa. In the morning Edward Hubler will speak on "Shakespeare and the Comic Spirit," and Matthias Shaaber will speak on "Shakespeare Prognosis." In the afternoon Benton Spruance will discuss "Painting and Literature: A Note in Relationships." There will be an exhibition of selected illustrations from Blake to Picasso.

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